OCI

Notes on

Methodology

THE OCI UNITED NATIONS VOTING FILE

The UN Voting File is now available for use by any OCI analyst. The file is a set of computer programs that permit rapid retrieval and comparison of the voting records of any UN member nation or any group of nations. The data contain the recorded votes in every General Assembly from 1946 to 1974.[1] Response time is "same day": printed answers to most queries can be expected within 1-3 hours.

The system can provide answers to simple reference questions such as the specific vote of a nation on a certain issue. Analysts may also use it to determine the votes of the entire membership on a certain issue.

The UN Voting File can be used to chart the rate of agreement between any two nations over a specified time period. For example, an analyst may wish to compare the degree to which Yugoslavia and the USSR voted together between 1965-1970. The system computes this on a yearly basis as shown in Figure 1.[2]

If greater detail is required, the system prints a listing that describes each resolution and the voting position of the two nations. A sample of this listing is shown in Figure 2, which is a comparison of Yugoslav and Soviet positions in 1958. Interpret the headings on the listing this way:

   DATE: Date of the vote by year and month.

OFFICIAL USE ONLY

Figure 1

COMPARISON OF YUGOSLAVIA AND USSR, 1965-1970

YEARLY LISTING OF RICE-BEYLE INDEX OF VOTING COHESION

RICE-BEYLE INDEX OF VOTING COHESION FOR 1965...... 89.29
RICE-BEYLE INDEX OF VOTING COHESION FOR 1966...... 89.62
RICE-BEYLE INDEX OF VOTING COHESION FOR 1967...... 88.16
RICE-BEYLE INDEX OF VOTING COHESION FOR 1968...... 76.42
RICE-BEYLE INDEX OF VOTING COHESION FOR 1969...... 90.91
RICE-BEYLE INDEX OF VOTING COHESION FOR 1970...... 79.85

Figure 2

UNITED NATIONS VOTE SUMMARY FOR YUGOSLAV AND USSR

COMPARISON OF YUGOSLAVIA AND USSR, 1958

DATE	RES NO	YUGOSLAV	USSR	<SUBJECT>	<WHERE>	<EPISODE>
5809	0	NO	NO	TERRIT	PLENARY	EWH
5809	1239	YES	YES	MEMBER	PLENARY	EWR
5809	1239	YES	YES	ADMINI	PLENARY	EWR
5809	1239	NO	NO	MEMBER	PLENARY	EWR
5809	1239	NO	NO	MEMBER	PLENARY	EWR
5809	1239	NO	NO	MEMBER	PLENARY	EWR
5810	0	YES	YES	ECOASS	PLENARY	NAO
5810	1245	YES	YES	REFUGE	PLENARY	AFN
5810	1248	YES	YES	CIVILR	PLENARY	AFA
5810	1248	YES	YES	CIVILR	PLENARY	AFA
5810	1248	YES	YES	CIVILR	PLENARY	AFA
5810	1248	YES	YES	CIVILR	PLENARY	NAO
5810	1248	YES	YES	CIVILR	PLENARY	AFA
5810	1248	YES	YES	CIVILR	PLENARY	AFA
5811	1252*	ABS	NO	ATOMIC	PLENARY	EWU
5811	1252	YES	YES	ATOMIC	PLENARY	EWU
5811	1263*	YES	NO	BUDGET	PLENARY	ME5
5811	1264*	ABS	NO	TERRIT	PLENARY	EWK
5812	0*	ABS	NO	MEMBER	PLENARY	NAO
5812	1302	YES	YES	CIVILR	PLENARY	AFI
5812	1307	YES	YES	TREATY	PLENARY	SEA
5812	1307	YES	YES	TREATY	PLENARY	SEA
5812	1312	NO	NO	CIVILR	PLENARY	EWH
5812	1317	YES	YES	INDDEV	PLENARY	NAO
5812	1318*	ABS	NO	TRADE	PLENARY	NAO
5812	1318	YES	YES	TRADE	PLENARY	NAO
5812	1351*	YES	NO	BUDGET	PLENARY	NAO
5812	1348*	ABS	NO	SCIENT	PLENARY	NAO
5812	0	ABS	ABS	COLIND	PLENARY	MEA
5812	0	NO	NO	COLIND	PLENARY	MEA
5812	0	YES	YES	COLIND	PLENARY	MEA

NOTE: * = VOTE DIFFERENTLY
       ### = A MEMBER BUT DIDN'T VOTE OR ABSTAIN
       *** = NOT A UN MEMBER AT TIME OF VOTE

RICE-BEYLE INDEX OF VOTING COHESION = 85.48

-2-

OFFICIAL USE ONLY

RES. NO: UN resolution number when such a number is assigned.

YUGOSLAV: Voting position of Yugoslavia.

USSR: Voting position of the USSR.

SUBJECT: Subject code based on the UN's own classification system (Colonial, Legal, etc.). A complete list of the subject codes can be found in the Appendix.

WHERE: Type of session in which the vote took place (plenary, 1st Committee, etc.).

EPISODE: Episode code. Some resolutions are related to international events, such as Chinese membership in the UN, or to specific geographic areas. A complete list of the Episode codes can be found in the Appendix.

It is also possible to include a short abstract of each vote. An example of the abstracts is shown in Figure 3 on the following page.

The UN Voting File also can measure the cohesiveness or solidarity exhibited by a group of nations. The user may specify one of six predefined groups or he may select a set of nations of his own choosing.[3]

For example, an analyst may wish to determine whether the Group of 77--the caucus of developing nations--votes as a solid bloc on all issues or tends to show solidarity only on certain kinds of issues. As shown in Figure 4, the listing printed in response to such a query shows first the voting outcome for each resolution, with the distribution of votes for the entire membership (TOTAL VOTE). The next line is a series of codes describing the resolution. The EPISODE, WHERE, SUBJECT, and DATE

Figure 3

UNITED NATIONS VOTE SUMMARY FOR YUGOSLAV AND USSR

COMPARISON OF YUGOSLAVIA AND USSR, 1958

DATE	RES NO	YUGOSLAV	USSR	<SUBJECT>	<WHERE>	<EPISODE>	
5809	0	NO	NO	TERRIT	PLENARY	EWH	RECOM INCL OF ITEM 69 ON QUES OF HUNGARY IN AGENDA.(GAOR-13-55)
5809	1239	YES	YES	MEMBER	PLENARY	EWR	REJECT INDIA PROPOSAL TO INCLUDE ITEM ON CHINA REPRESENTATION IN UN.(GAOR-13-106A)
5809	1239	YES	YES	ADMINI	PLENARY	EWR	AMEND DELETING PARA 2 WHICH DECIDES NOT TO CONSIDER PROPOSALS TOEXCLUDE NATIONALIST CHINA OR SEAT RED CHINA IN UN(GAOR-13-106B)
5809	1239	NO	NO	MEMBER	PLENARY	EWR	PARA 1 OF RECOM REJECTING INDIAN REQUEST TO INCLUDE ITEM ON CHINA REPR.(GAOR-13-106)
5809	1239	NO	NO	MEMBER	PLENARY	EWR	PARA 2 OF GEN COMTE RECOM (A/3926), TO IGNORE ANY FURTHER PROPOSALS ON REPR OF CHINA IN THIS SESSION.(GAOR-13-107A)
5809	1239	NO	NO	MEMBER	PLENARY	EWR	GEN COMTE RECOM ON(A/3926) CHINA REPR.(GAOR-13-107B)
5810	0	YES	YES	ECOASS	PLENARY	NAO	MBRS OF GOV COUN OF SPEC FUND FOR ECON ASST TO UNDER -DEV STATES TO BE ELECTED FROM UN MBRS OR SPEC AGENCIES (GAOR-13-387)
5810	1245	YES	YES	REFUGE	PLENARY	AFN	GP PARA 3 OF 4TH COMTE RES (A/3959) ON S W AFRICA; EXPRESSES DEEP CONCERN OVER CONDITIONS IN S W AFRICA.(GAOR-13-410)
5810	1248	YES	YES	CIVILR	PLENARY	AFA	S AFRICA TO OBSERVE CHARTER OBLIG ATION CONCERNING APART HEID POLICIES.(GAOR-13-412)
5810	1248	YES	YES	CIVILR	PLENARY	AFA	NEED FOR LEGISLATION & PRACTICE TO ENSURE PEACE , HARMONY & MU-TUAL RESPECT OF RTS IN MULTI-RACIAL SOCIETY.(GAOR-13-413A)
5810	1248	YES	YES	CIVILR	PLENARY	AFA	RES(A/3962) PARA 2 AFFIRMS INCONSISTENCY OF DISCRIM POLICIES OF MEMBER STATES.(GAOR-13-413B)
5810	1248	YES	YES	CIVILR	PLENARY	NAC	PARA 3-UN MBRS TO CONFROM TO CHARTER OBLIGS CONCERNING HUMAN RTS & FREEDOMS.(GAOR-13-413C)
5810	1248	YES	YES	CIVILR	PLENARY	AFA	RES(A/3962) PARA 4 REGRET AT S AFRICA DISREGARD OF APPEALS FOR CHANGE OF APARTHEID POLICY.(GAOR-13-413D)

NOTE: * = VOTE DIFFERENTLY
= A MEMBER BUT DIDN'T VOTE OR ABSTAIN
*** = NOT A UN MEMBER AT TIME OF VOTE

Figure 4

**********SUMMARY OF UNITED NATIONS VOTING ISSUES FOR 1970**********
COHESION OF THE 77 ON AFRICAN COLONIAL ISSUES

		YES	NO	ABST	ABS	TOT
RESOL# 2703	TOTAL VOTE	85	11	12	19	127
	TOTAL VOTE % =	66.9	8.7	9.4	15.0	

<EPISODE>	<WHERE>	<SUBJECT>	<SERIAL>	<DATE>	<TYPE>
AFP	PLENARY	41COLIND	100	7012	SUBSTANT

GROUP POSITION ON THIS VOTE FOR GROUP OF 77

	YES	NO	ABST	ABS
GROUP VOTE =	71	0	3	16
GROUP VOTE % =	78.9	0.0	3.3	17.8

LEVEL OF SOLIDARITY.... 89.4%

GROUP COUNTRIES VOTING 'NO'
LATIN AMER.
ASIA........
EUROPE.....
AFRICA.....
MIDDLE EAST

GROUP COUNTRIES ABSTAINING
LATIN AMER. BRAZIL
ASIA........
EUROPE.....
AFRICA...... GADON   MALAWI
MIDDLE EAST

GROUP COUNTRIES VOTING 'YES'
LATIN AMER.	ARGENTI	BARBADOS	CHILE	COLOMBIA	CUBA	DOM REP	ECUADOR	GUATEMAL
	GUYANA	HAITI	HONDURAS	JAMAICA	MEXICO	NICARAG	PANAMA	PARAGUAY
	PERU	TRIN/TOB	URUGUAY	VENEZUEL				
ASIA........	BURMA	CAMBODIA	CEYLON	INDIA	INDONES	LAOS	MALAYSIA	NEPAL
	PHILIPP	SINGAPOR	THAILAND					
EUROPE.....	YUGOSLAV							
AFRICA.....	BURUNDI	CAMEROON	CENT-AFR	ZAIRE	EQ-GUINE	ETHIOPIA	GAMBIA	GHANA
	GUINEA	IVORY CO	KENYA	LIBERIA	MALAGASY	MALI	MAURITAN	MAURITIS
	NIGER	NIGERIA	SIERRA L	SOMALIA	SUDAN	TANZANIA	TOGO	UGANDA
	UP-VOLTA	ZAMBIA						
MIDDLE EAST	ALGERIA	IRAN	IRAQ	JORDAN	KUWAIT	LEBANON	LIBYA	MOROCCO
	SAUDI AR	S.YEMEN	SYRIA	TUNISIA	EGYPT			

GROUP COUNTRIES ABSENT
LATIN AMER.	BOLIVIA	COSTA RI	EL SALVA					
ASIA........	AFGHAN	FIJI	MALDIVE	PAKISTAN				
EUROPE.....								
AFRICA.....	BOTSWANA	CHAD	CONGO	DAHOMEY	LESOTHO	RWANDA	SENEGAL	SWAZILAN
MIDDLE EAST	YEMEN							

STATISTICS FOR YEAR 1970
NUMBER OF VOTES PROCESSED =   8
    AVERAGE LEVEL OF SOLIDARITY FOR GROUP OF 77   ..... 89.31

codes are identical to those described above.
SERIAL refers only to the identification number
assigned to each vote. TYPE indicates whether
a vote is procedural or substantive; the former
usually is a vote on an amendment.

The program then prints the distribution of
votes from the specified group (GROUP VOTE) and
the percentages cast for each voting position (GROUP
VOTE %).[4] The next figure (LEVEL OF SOLIDARITY) is
a measurement of the cohesiveness of the group on
this resolution.[5] The computer then prints the
voting position of each nation. The program also
computes the average solidarity for the group for
each year.[6] It is also possible to include the ab-
stract of each resolution, as in Figure 3. Finally,
the system can provide assistance in conducting a
statistical analysis of the voting behavior of cer-
tain nations. A variety of statistical programs
already available on the OJCS system can be used
for this.[7] To operate these programs for most ap-
plications, it is necessary to have data coded and
keypunched on IBM cards, and even with only a mod-
erate volume of data this process can take as long
as two weeks.

To get around this delay, the UN Voting File
has been programmed to enable producing a set of
keypunched data cards in a format compatible with
the statistical programs. This data set usually
can be produced within 4-6 hours. As soon as the
pre-punched program cards required for the desired
statistical analysis are added, the program can be
run.

Operation of the UN Voting File for other than
such statistical analyses is not difficult. Posing
a complex query rarely requires more than ten min-
utes of the user's time at the terminal on the
OJCS interactive system. For example, the user may
wish to examine the agreement between the USSR and
Yugoslavia on Colonial subjects relating to Africa
between 1965-1970. The user may also wish to look
only at plenary votes, exclude procedural votes,

and obtain an abstract of each resolution. To obtain the answer to this query, the user must enter the following 10 statements:

    COUNTRY1 = 'YUGOSLAV',

    COUNTRY2 = 'USSR',

    YR1 = '1965',

    YR2 = '1970',

    TITLE = 'COMPARISON OF YUGOSLAVIA AND THE
            USSR, 1965-70',

    SUBJECT_GROUP (1) = '4',

    EPISODE_GROUP (1) = 'AF',

    WHERE_VOTE (1) = 'PLENARY',

    TYPE_ISSUE = 'SUBSTANT',

    SEE_ABSTRACT = 'YES';

The UN Voting File is operated by the Methods and Technology Staff in OCI. Requests for its use may be addressed to ██████████████████████ 25X1A
25X1A ██████████████████████ .

FOOTNOTES

1   The data file for this system was obtained from its originators: the US Naval Academy Political Science Department and the Office of Management Systems in the US Department of State. ████████ 25X1A of the Office of Joint Computer Services wrote the programs that operate the system at CIA.

-7-

2   The formula used to measure the amount of agreement is known as the Rice-Beyle Index of Voting Cohesion:

$$IVC = \frac{f + 1/2\ (g)}{t}$$

Where IVC = Index of Voting Cohesion

            f = Number of votes in which both nations agreed

            g = Number of votes where one nation abstained and the other voted either yes or no.

            t = Total number of votes.

This formula distinguishes between complete yes-no disagreement and partial disagreement. Partial disagreement occurs when one nation abstains and the second votes yes or no. If this difference were not provided for, the same level of agreement would be obtained in cases as disparate as the following:

    (a)   US votes yes on all issues, Cuba votes no on all issues. Percentage of agreement = 0.0 percent.

    (b)   US votes yes on all issues, Mexico abstains on all issues. Percentage of agreement = 0.0 percent.

However, using the IVC formula above, the second case would reflect not total disagreement, but rather a partial agreement of 50%.

$$IVC = \frac{0 + 1/2 \times 1}{1} = 1/2 = 50\%$$

-8-

The Index of Voting Cohesion in Figure 2 was computed as follows:

$$f = 24 \qquad IVC = \frac{24 + 1/2(5)}{31} = 85.48$$

$$g = 5$$

$$t = 31$$

3   The six pre-defined groups which may be selected by the analyst are: the Group of 77, the Nonaligned nations, Latin American nations, the Organization of American States, the Soviet and East European nations, and NATO.

4   There are now 105 members in the Group of 77, of which 99 are UN members. In 1970, there were 90 members of the Group of 77 who were also UN members.

5   The Level of Solidarity measures the degree to which the members of the group vote the "group position." This position is defined simply as the position receiving the most votes. If, for example, 45 nations voted "yes" and 30 voted "no," the group position would be "yes.") The formula is:

$$s = \frac{N + 1/2(a)}{t}$$

Where S = Level of Solidarity

   N = number of nations who agreed completely with group position.

   a = number of nations who agreed partially with the group position. Partial agreement occurs when the group position is yes or no and a nation abstains or is absent. Partial agreement can also occur if the group position is abstain and a nation votes yes or no.

$$t = \text{total number of nations in the group.}$$

To compute the Level of Solidarity displayed in Figure 4:

$$N = 72$$

$$a = 9 \text{ (abstentions)} + 11 \text{ (absent)}$$

$$t = 95$$

$$s = \frac{72 + 1/2 \ (9+11)}{95} = 86.3\%$$

6   Average solidarity is computed by summing the solidarity level for each resolution and dividing by the total number of resolutions.

7   The majority of these measures are found in the program package known as "Biomedical Computer Programs" developed at UCLA.

APPENDIX

SUBJECT CODES

1. POLITICAL

POLGEN = Political (General)
DISARM = Disarmament and Weapons
ATOMIC = Peaceful Uses of Atomic Energy
TERRIT = Unification/Territorial Integrity (of Sovereign Nations)
CIVILR = Internal Politics/Civil Rights
PEACE = Peacekeeping (incl. Funding, Admin. Factfinding)

2. ECONOMIC

EOCOGEN = Economic (General)
INDDEV = Industrial Development
AGRICUL = Food and Agriculture
ECOASS = Assistance
TRADE   = Trade

3. SOCIAL, TECHNICAL, CULTURAL

SOCGEN = Social (General)
CULTUR = Social Cultural
SCIENT = Scientific/Technical
HEALTH = Medical/Health/Environment
REFUGE = Humanitarian/Refugee/Human Rts.
EDUCAT = Education

4. COLONIAL/TRUSTEESHIPS

COLGEN = Colonial Trusteeships
COLIND = Reforms/Independence/Self-Determination
COLRTS = Internal Civil Rights (in colonies)

5. UNO ADMIN AND FINANCE

ADMGEN = General
BUDGET = Budgetary
ADMINI = Administration
MEMBER = Membership

-11-

6. LEGAL

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LGLGEN = General
INTLAW = International Court of Justice
TREATY = Treaties/Legal Instruments
INVETS = Investigations/Factfinding (not incl. Peacekeeping)
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EPISODE CODES

GROUP
CODE

EW   EAST-WEST CONFRONTATIONS

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EWM   MISCELLANEOUS
EWB   BALKANS (GREEK CIVIL WAR, HUMAN RTS, ETC.)
EWC   CUBAN MISSILE CRISIS
EWU   USA VS USSR (IDEOLOGICAL DIFFERENCES--COLD WAR)
EWK   KOREAN CONFLICT
EWG   CHINA GENERAL (POLITICAL QUES., TIBET SITUATION, ETC.)
EWR   CHINA UNITED NATIONS REPRESENTATION
EWH   HUNGARIAN CRISIS (USSR INVASION & AFTERMATH)
EWS   RELATIONS WITH FRANCO SPAIN
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ME   MIDDLE EAST CONFRONTATIONS (INCLUDE NORTH AFRICAN ARAB STATES)

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MEM   UN MEMBERSHIP
MEP   PALESTINE PARTITION/POLITICAL SOLUTION (CONCILIATION COMISN)
MER   PALESTINIAN REFUGEES (UNRWA)
MEA   ALGERIAN SITUATION
MET   TRUSTEESHIPS/COLONIAL/INDEPENDENCE (MOROCCO, TUNISIA)
ME4   1948 WAR
ME5   1956 WAR
ME6   1967 WAR
ME7   1973 WAR
MEG   GENERAL & MISCELLANEOUS
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AM   AMERICAS

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AMM   MEMBERSHIP (UN AND OTHER ORGANIZATIONS)
AMT   TRUSTEESHIPS/COLONIAL/INDEPENDENCE
AMG   GENERAL & MISCELLANEOUS
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EU   <u>EUROPE</u>

    EUM   MEMBERSHIP
    EUC   CYPRUS
    EUR   GENERAL & MISCELLANEOUS
    EUT   TRUSTEESHIP/COLONIAL/INDEPENDENCE

AS   <u>ASIA</u>

    ASM   MEMBERSHIP
    AST   TRUSTEESHIP/COLONIAL/INDEPENDENCE
    ASG   GENERAL & MISCELLANEOUS

PA   <u>PACIFIC</u> (AUSTRALIA, NEW ZEALAND, ISLANDS)

    PAM   MEMBERSHIP
    PAT   TRUSTEESHIP/COLONIAL/INDEPENDENCE
    PAG   GENERAL & MISCELLANEOUS

AF   <u>AFRICA</u> (NON-ARAB STATES)

    AGF   GENERAL MISCELLANEOUS
    AFI   TREATMENT OF INDIANS IN S. AFRICA
    AFM   MEMBERSHIP
    AFT   TRUSTEESHIP/COLONIAL/INDEPENDENCE EXCEPT S.W. AFRICA
    AFA   APARTHEID IN S. AFRICA (RACISM ELSEWHERE IN AFRICA)
    AFN   S. AFRICA & S.W. AFRICA DISPUTE (NAMIBIA)
    AFR   SOUTH RHODESIA
    AFP   PORTUGUESE COLONIAL AFRICA
    AFC   CONGO CRISIS
    AFS   SOUTH AFRICA IN GENERAL

<u>OTHER CODES</u>

    SEA   SEA ORIENTED RESOLUTIONS
    NAO   NOT AREA ORIENTED/UNASSIGNED/UNKNOWN